

Shorter, Chere

From: ristorante@frantoio.com%inter2 [ristorante@frantoio.com] on behalf of ristorante@frantoio.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2004 5:05 PM
To: Shorter, Chere
Cc: mail@santacruzolive.com%inter2; oliveoil@cooc.com%inter2; rzecca@aol.com%inter2
Subject: USDA Request of Comments for Proposed Olive Oil Standards

Dear Ms. Shorter,

I am writing to you in my capacity of Panel Leader for the California Olive Oil Council panel of tasters, former President of the COOC and current member of its Board of Directors.

I strongly recommend that the USDA adopt the proposed standards for olive oil grades. We are unfortunately subject to imports that do not have any type of regulations to comply with and our marketplace has suffered for years with misleading labeling of inferior products sold in this country. Our organization has created its own internal, voluntary set of standards in order to protect American producers and facilitate American consumers in selecting extra-virgin olive oil.

My team of tasters has been recognized by the International Olive Oil Council for the last 5 years and we have certified up to 140 oils a year as 'extra-virgin' and granted these oils the COOC seal. In adopting national standards that reflect the international parameters, we will close a regretful loophole that presently facilitates the importation of mislabeled olive oils which unfairly harms American producers.

I take this opportunity to thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincere Regards,

Roberto M M Zecca
President
Frantoio Olive Oil Company
152 Shoreline Highway
Mill Valley, CA 94941

11/12/2004